



**ARNOLD
JOSEPH
KEMP**

**I WOULD SURVIVE
I COULD SURVIVE
I SHOULD SURVIVE**

Resources

Suggested Student Assignments and Class Discussion Questions

The following are examples of assignments and class discussion questions faculty and TAs can use in conjunction with the Arnold J. Kemp exhibition. While the museum is closed, students are encouraged to visit the extensive exhibition website: <https://manettishremmuseum.ucdavis.edu/arnold-joseph-kemp>.

MSM curators are available to give guest lectures to UC Davis classes on our exhibitions via Zoom. Please contact MSM Academic Liaison Jennifer Wagelie at jjwagelie@ucdavis.edu for further information.

And please feel free to share your students' work with the MSM for our archives!

Student Assignments

Zoom In/ Zoom Out

Drawing on one book in the series *POSSIBLE BIBLIOGRAPHY*, examine the photograph in detail. How does the artist hold the book? What details can we decipher based on how he is holding the book? What does the book's cover communicate? What clues does the book's cover artwork tell us about its contents? How does lighting impact the mood of the photograph? What about the scale of the artist's hands in relation to the book's size? How would you describe the photograph in detail to someone who has never seen it before?

Now, do a preliminary search on the title. What information can you gather about the text? About the author? Is it scholarly? Creative? Popular? See if you can access the table of contents and source a scanned excerpt. What does this information tell you about the book's argument, scope, objects of inquiry?

Making some educated guesses, connect Kemp's photographic qualities to the contents of the book. Based on the formal qualities of the photograph, how might we assess the title's significance for Kemp? How does the book sit in relation to the other titles in the series? In relation to the artist himself?

Writing and Seeing

Clearly, writing is a key facet of the artist's studio practice. Your job in this exercise is to translate one of Kemp's poems into drawing, photography, painting, or sculpture and to translate one of Kemp's paintings, photographs, or sculpture into writing. The challenge will require that you create your own translation as you are actively looking at and consulting Kemp's works. You will use the structure of his poetry as a guide for your own creative endeavor.

After finishing the task, reflect on the experience. What was your process? How did seeing shape your writing and how did writing shape your seeing? What do these processes share? What felt different in each process?

A Poetic Annotation

Choose a piece of Kemp's writing. Your task will be to annotate the poem and offer up a "possible bibliography" for the uninitiated reader. Offer up 7-10 sources that would help a reader in their journey through the poem. These sources can be peer reviewed, popular, or artistic. You must offer 3-5 sentences per annotation describing how the source relates. You will end the exercise by articulating your own investment in these sources and how your perspective, voice, and subjectivity shaped the way you read and analyzed the poem.

Discussion Questions

The Color Black

What is the color black? What does it mean? What are, if any, its limits? Consider black as it connects to Kemp's work or its concept both generally and theoretically.

Gesture and Touch

What does the act of touch in Kemp's *POSSIBLE BIBLIOGRAPHY* provoke in you, especially considering the current pandemic when we're asked to refrain from that action?

Creating a New History

POSSIBLE BIBLIOGRAPHY is a deeply personal look at Kemp's library and the books and scholarship that have had an impact on him. The work is thought to straddle the personal and the political while questioning what it means to engage in study. How have your studies at UC Davis paralleled the work Kemp is presenting? What new history have you created or will create for yourself through learning? How will this shape your future?

Selected Works

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